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# INSIDE WASHINGTON

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## *Surtax Appears Doomed*

WASHINGTON — Congressional pressure is mounting for President Johnson to shelve his six per cent surcharge tax proposal.

Democratic legislative leaders have reported to the President that the ranking members of the House Ways & Means Committee are opposed to a tax increase this year and want him to drop his proposal.

This growing bipartisan opposition to the President's proposed tax boost was revealed at a White House legislative meeting by Speaker John McCormack, Mass., and Senate Democratic Whip Russell Long, La., who is also chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

### SOUGHT VIEWS

In discussing the prospect of his tax proposal, the President asked the legislators for their views on Sen. William Proxmire's announced opposition to a tax increase this year, stating:

"Senator Proxmire wants me to shelve the six per cent surcharge because of the changing economic climate. Is there any support for this position?"

"I should say there is," replied Senator Long. "In addition to Senator Hartke (Ind.) and myself on the Senate Finance Committee, Sens. John Williams (Del.) and Frank Carlson (Kan.), the ranking Republicans, are opposed to any tax increase this year."

Senator Long also reported that Sen. Stuart Symington, D-Mo., had cooled on the idea of boosting taxes, quoting him as saying: "I was for a tax boost last summer, but I am not sure now."

### OTHER OPPOSITION

After hearing Long's report, the President turned to McCormack, asking: "What is the situation in the House Ways and Means Committee? I haven't heard anything from Wilbur (Rep. Wilbur Mills, D-Ark., chairman)."

"Wilbur and John Byrnes (Wis., ranking Republican) are presently opposed to any tax increase," stated McCormack. "I don't think Wilbur has said anything to the press, but I know he would like to see the tax hike shelved if that is possible."

"As a practical matter," McCormack added, "I think most of the committee would like to ditch the tax proposal. It will face tough sledding."

While the President gave no hint that the reports of Long and McCormack had caused him to change his plans to push for a tax increase this year, he concluded the meeting by stating: "We can talk some more on taxes later. Hearings won't be for several months. By then we should have more information on the economy."

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